
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6482

AN ACT CONCERNING BIRTH CERTIFICATES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH.

SUMMARY:

This bill allows certified homeless youth and emancipated minors to access or receive their birth certificates. It sets conditions for how youth are certified as homeless and how they can access their birth certificates.

Current law does not allow minors access to their birth certificates (but their parents, guardians, and certain other family members can obtain birth certificates for them).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013

CERTIFIED HOMELESS YOUTH

Under the bill, a certified homeless youth is a 15- to 17-year old person, not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian, who is a homeless child or youth as defined in specified federal law (see BACKGROUND), and certified as homeless by one of the following:

1. a school district homeless liaison;
2. the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, or the director's designee; or
3. the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or the director's designee.

Under the bill, when a certified homeless youth is requesting his or her birth certificate, the youth must be accompanied by the person certifying him or her as homeless. The youth must present a written

request to:

1. the registrar's office of the town where the youth was born;
2. the registrar's office of the town where the youth's mother resided at the time of birth;
3. if the birth certificate has been electronically filed, any registrar of vital statistics in the state with access to the electronic vital records system, as authorized by the Department of Public Health (DPH); or
4. DPH's Vital Records Office.

The bill requires the certified homeless youth to present to DPH or the registrar sufficient identifying information as DPH regulations may require. The person certifying the youth as homeless must also present sufficient information to indicate that he or she meets the certification requirements.

BACKGROUND

Federal Definition of Homeless Youth

In the federal public health and welfare statute, "homeless children and youths" are defined, for purposes of certain education programs, as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes:

1. children and youths who are (a) sharing other people's housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; (b) living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; (c) living in emergency or transitional shelters; (d) abandoned in hospitals; or (e) awaiting foster care placement;
2. children and youths with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation;
3. children and youths living in cars, parks, public spaces,

abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

4. migratory children (such as children of certain migratory agriculture workers or fishers who are living in the circumstances described above) (42 USC § 11434a).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18 Nay 9 (04/02/2013)